

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 SY-04 NIC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

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R 141611Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6964

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, GR

SUBJ: STUDENT UNREST

1. CLASH BETWEEN STUDENTS AND POLICE EVENING JANUARY 13
RESULTED IN HOSPITALIZATION OF HALF DOZEN OR MORE POLICE AND
FOUR STUDENTS ARRESTED. VIOLENCE TOOK PLACE NEAR OMONIA
SQUARE WHEN THREE DIFFERENT DEMONSTRATING GROUPS CONVERGED
IN ONE PLACE WITH RESULTING STREET CONFUSION AND STRAIN ON
POLICE ON DUTY.

2. SCENE OF CONFRONTATION WAS AT SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS TRAINING
TO BE MEDICAL ASSISTANTS. SIT-IN, WHICH REPORTEDLY WAS
ORGANIZED BY HARD-CORE MARXIST GROUP AT SCHOOL, WAS
LAUNCHED JANUARY 13 BY SEVERAL HUNDRED STUDENTS TO
PROTEST DISCIPLINARY DISMISSAL OF TEN STUDENTS. SIT-IN
WAS PEACEFUL UNTIL CROWD OUTSIDE BUILDING SWELLED BY
SEVERAL THOUSAND PERSONS, MOSTLY DRAWN FROM AN UNRELATED
BUT SYMPATHETIC WOMEN'S MARCH AND FROM LARGE MEETING
NEARBY OF COMMUNIST RIGAS FERRAIOS STUDENT CLUB.

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3. UP TO ITS CONCLUSION AT PARLIAMENT, WOMEN'S

DEMONSTRATION WHICH SPEARHEADED BY MOTHERS OF STUDENTS TORTURED DURING JUNTA ERA WAS QUIET AFFAIR. NOTWITHSTANDING SUBSTANTIAL PRESS BUILD-UP, LESS THAN 2,000 JOINED IN MARCH FROM UNIVERSITY TO PARLIAMENT WHERE SEVERAL PETITIONS PRESENTED CALLING FOR GREATER PUNISHMENT OF JUNTISTS, COMPENSATION FOR TORTURE VICTIMS, MORE DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION, AND PROTECTION OF YOUTH AGAINST OFFICIAL INTIMIDATION. THE INVOLVEMENT OF RIGAS FERRAIOS YOUTH IN THE FRAY MAY HAVE BEEN RESULT OF COINCIDENCE OF TIMING AND PLACE OF THEIR MEETING WITH THAT OF SIT-IN.

4. MINISTER EDUCATION ZEPPOS IS HOLDING EMERGENCY MEETING WITH DIRECTORS OF ALL HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOOLS JANUARY 14. ALTHOUGH REASON FOR GATHERING NOT STATED, IT PRESUMABLY HAS TO DO WITH GROWING DEMONSTRATIONS IN PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS AND TO CONSIDER CALL BY RECTOR OF THESSALONIKI UNIVERSITY FOR CLOSING ALL HIGHER SCHOOLS IN THAT CITY BECAUSE OF "STUDENT UNREST."

5. INTERESTING TWIST TO CAMPUS DEMONSTRATIONS RECENTLY IS THAT THEY HAVE INVOLVED MANY NON-PRESTIGIOUS AND OCCUPATIONAL SCHOOLS SUCH AS TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTES, LOWER TECHNICAL SCHOOLS (KATE), MIDWIFERY INSTITUTES AND, AS WITH LAST NIGHT'S FRACAS, SCHOOL FOR TRAINING HOSPITAL ATTENDANTS. THE USUAL PATTERN FOR STUDENT DISSENT, WHICH HAS DEVELOPED OVER TWO YEARS, CONTINUES TO PREVAIL--BREAD-AND-BUTTER STUDENT GRIEVANCES ARE REINFORCED WITH MORE GENERAL POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEMANDS. DEMONSTRATING, WHICH IS PREDOMINANTLY ORGANIZED BY MARXIST/LEFTISTS, IS NOW A MAJOR MEANS OF INITIATION INTO STUDENTSHIP AS WELL AS A SPAWNING GROUND FOR STUDENT LEADERS.

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